

Message Text

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ACTION HEW-08

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PASS DHEW (OIA, OIH, NIH, HSMHA, FDA)

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TAGS: OSCI, SGEN, TGEN, IN

SUBJ: U. S.- INDO HEALTH COOPERATION

REF: STATE 110863

BEGIN SUMMARY. ON HIS RETURN TO NEW DELHI, DR. J. D. SHRIVASTAV, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF HEALTH SERVICES, REVIEWED WITH DEPUTY SCIENTIFIC ATTACHE HIS CONVERSATIONS IN GENEVA WITH DR. PAUL EHRLICH, OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL HEALTH, DHEW (REFTEL) AS WELL AS THE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS WITHIN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH. SHRIVASTAV FEELS THAT THE BARRIERS, AS MENTIONED IN REFTEL, AGAINST THE EXTENSION OF COOPERATION WITH THE U. S. ARE PRIMARILY, AT THIS POINT, WITH THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE. HE INDICATED THAT THE MOH, AS WELL AS A NUMBER OF OTHER MINISTRIES, WAS REQUIRED TO ABSORB A 40 PERCENT REDUCTION IN THE 1973-74 BUDGET (BEGINNING APRIL1), BECAUSE OF THE FOOD SHORTAGE PROBLEMS. IF THE FUNDS ARE NOT RESTORED THIS REDUCTION WOULD SEVERELY LIMIT THE INITIATION OF NEW PROGRAMS FOR THIS FISCAL YEAR AND CREATE A SERIOUS PROBLEM IN THE SUPPORT OF ON- GOING COMMITMENTS IN
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HEALTH SERVICES, FAMILY PLANNING AND RESEARCH. HE FEELS THAT UNDER HIS SEVERE BUDGET CRISIS THE RESOLUTION OF THE PL-480 ISSUE IS PARAMOUNT IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF COOPERATION WITH THE U. S. END SUMMARY.

1. IN A RECENT MEETING WITH THE DEPUTY SECRETARY DR. J. D. SHRIVASTAV STATED THAT HE WAS PLEASED TO HAVE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO REVIEW THE PRESENT SITUATION IN REGARD TO HEALTH COOPERATION BETWEEN THE MOH AND THE DHEW WITH DR. PAUL EHRLICH WHILE BOTH WERE ATTENDING THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION MEETINGS IN GENEVA. HE MENTIONED TO DR. EHRLICH THAT THERE WAS NO PROBLEM WITH SCIENTIST- TO- SCIENTIST COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATION. THIS IS GOING ON ALL THE TIME AND CAN EXPAND. THE FINANCIAL AND POLITICAL PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN GOVERNMENT- TO- GOVERNMENT COOPERATION IS ANOTHER THING AND WILL HAVE TO BE SORTED OUT AT A HIGHER LEVEL. HE REFERRED TO THE TALKS ON THE PL-480 ISSUE NOW BEING UNDERTAKEN BETWEEN THE U. S. AND INDIA AS CRUCIAL IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF FUTURE COOPERATION. SHRIVASTAV WAS HIGHLY DISTURBED OVER THE RECENT MOH BUDGET CUT OF 40 PERCENT ACROSS THE BOARD WHICH WILL SERIOUSLY EFFECT ALL HEALTH PROBLEMS, BUT MOST SEVERELY RESEARCH. IN FACT, A BUDGET REDUCTION OF THIS AMOUNT, AT THIS TIME, WILL CERTAINLY ALTER THE PROGRAMS ENVISIONED FOR THE FIFTH FIVE- YEAR PLAN BEGINNING IN 1974. FOR THIS REASON HE FEELS THE PL-480 TALKS ARE SO IMPORTANT FOR FUTURE RESEARCH COLLABORATION. BECAUSE OF THESE RECENT MONEY RESTRICTIONS, THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT MAY BE MORE INCLINED TO RELY ON PL-480 FUNDING FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COOPERATIVE PROGRAMS WITH THE U. S. THAN THEY HAVE BEEN IN THE PAST COUPLE OF YEARS. HE FURTHER INDICATED THAT IF THE PL-480 ISSUES NOW UNDER DISCUSSION BETWEEN AMBASSADOR MOYNIHAN AND INDIAN OFFICIALS IN THE MOH AND MEA CAN BE RESOLVED TO THE INTEREST OF BOTH COUNTRIES, THIS WOULD CLEAR THE WAY FOR FUTURE COLLABORATION AND HOPEFULLY PROVIDE A FINANCIAL MECHANISM. IN ADDITION, HE FEELS THAT THERE IS THE NEED FOR SOME SORT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE U. S. AND INDIA, WHICH WOULD PROVIDE THE UMBRELLA FOR COLLABORATION IN A NUMBER OF FIELDS. COOPERATION IN THE HEALTH SCIENCES WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE COULD BE DELINEATED WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THIS AGREEMENT OR MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING. (THE IDEA OF A SEPARATE S & T AGREEMENT BETWEEN INDIA AND THE U. S. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HAS ALSO BEEN MENTIONED TO EMBASSY OFFICERS BY THE SECRETARY AND THE CHIEF SCIENCE OFFICER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY.)

2. SHRIVASTAV SAID HE WOULD BE HAPPY TO SEE A U. S. TEAM REPRESENTING HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT VISIT INDIA AND IN FACT, HE WROTE TO DR. AUSTIN OF DHEW LAST YEAR SUGGESTING THE POSSIBILITY OF A HIGH- LEVEL MEETING TO DISCUSS MUTUAL PRIORITIES. HE FURTHER STATED THAT FOR THE PAST YEAR HE HAS BEEN PROMOTING U. S.- INDO HEALTH COOPERATION WITHIN HIS MINISTRY. THIS HAS BEEN MADE EVIDENT, PARTICULARLY TO THE U. S. PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY TEAMS

DURING THEIR VISITS TO INDIA. HOWEVER, BEFORE A JOINT PROGRAM COULD BE DEVELOPED BOTH COUNTRIES SHOULD BE IN A POSITION TO COMMIT THEMSELVES FINANCIALLY TO A LONG- TERM COOPERATIVE PROGRAM AND TO BE ABLE TO DELINEATE THEIR PRIORITIES IN AN EFFORT TO DETERMINE FIELDS OF MUTUAL INTEREST.

3. COMMENT: IN EARLY MARCH THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF HEALTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR THE INTERNATIONAL CENTERS FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH ON A TOUR OF SOUTH ASIA MET AT THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH. THE MEETING WAS ARRANGED BY THE DEPUTY SCIATT AND DR. SHRIVASTAV, WHO BROUGHT TOGETHER HIS INSTITUTE DIRECTORS TO DISCUSS THEIR RESEARCH PROGRAMS AND SUGGEST AREAS OF POSSIBLE COOPERATION WITH THE U. S. MORE RECENTLY, SHRIVASTAV WAS QUITE POSITIVE WITH AN EPA TEAM IN SUGGESTING METHODS OF COLLABORATION WITH VARIOUS MINISTRY OF HEALTH INSTITUTES IN THE FIELD OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH. END COMMENT.

4. IN REGARD TO INDIAN HEALTH PRIORITIES, SHRIVASTAV STATED THAT COMMUNICABLE DISEASES WOULD PROBABLY BE NUMBER ONE. THE PRESENT ON- GOING RESEARCH PROJECT ON VECTOR CONTROL BETWEEN THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION, U. S. CENTER FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND THE INDIAN COUNCIL FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH WILL BE EXPIRING IN TWO YEARS. AS AN EXAMPLE, HE WOULD LIKE TO SEE THIS PROGRAM PICKED UP AS A PRIORITY ITEM TO ANY U. S.- INDO HEALTH COOPERATION. OTHER FIELDS SUCH AS DELIVERY OF HEALTH SERVICES; ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION; FERTILITY CONTROL; NUTRITION AND MALNUTRITION; FOOD AND DRUG ADULTERATION AND CANCER AND HEART DISEASE ARE AREAS OF HIGH PRIORITY TO THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT. THESE ARE ALL NON- CONTROVERSIAL FIELDS AND CERTAINLY CANNOT BE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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JUDGED IN ANY WAY POLITICAL. AS FAR AS HE IS CONCERNED, ANY OR ALL OF THESE PRIORITIES WOULD BE AGREEABLE AS THE BASIS FOR COOPERATION WITH U. S. AGENCIES ONCE THE FINANCIAL PROBLEMS ARE REMOVED AND THE PL-480 ISSUES ARE SETTLED.

5. COMMENT: BEFORE SHRIVASTAV'S TRIP TO GENEVA IN EARLY MAY HE WAS MUCH MORE POSITIVE ABOUT MOVING AHEAD WITH MOH- DHEW HEALTH COOPERATION. ON MANY OCCASIONS HE INDICATED TO THE DEPUTY SCIATT AND U. S. HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL VISITORS THAT HE WOULD WELCOME A HIGH- LEVEL TEAM VISIT TO INDIA TO WORK OUT AN ARRANGEMENT FOR COOPERATION. HOWEVER, HE WANTED BOTH SIDES TO BE IN A POSITION TO MAKE COMMITMENTS BOTH FINANCIALLY AND PROGRAMMATICALLY.

6. THIS WEEK, IN A DEPRESSED MOOD OVER RECENT BUDGET CUTS, SHRIVASTAV INDICATED TO DEPUTY SCIATT HE WAS REQUESTED BY THE MINISTRY TO GO SLOW ON ANY COMMITMENTS UNTIL A BETTER UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE U. S. AND INDIA EVOLVES ON THE PL-480 ISSUE. END COMMENT.
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